

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification ⁶ : A63F 3/02	A1	(11) International Publication Number: WO 98/19758
		(43) International Publication Date: 14 May 1998 (14.05.98)

(21) International Application Number: PCT/NL97/00589

(22) International Filing Date: 27 October 1997 (27.10.97)

(30) Priority Data:
1004407 1 November 1996 (01.11.96) NL(71)(72) Applicant and Inventor: GOLAD, Adar [NL/NL];
Scherekenweg 16, NL-8051 KH Hattem (NL).(74) Agent: FERGUSON, Alexander; Octrooibureau Vriesendorp &
Gaade, P.O. Box 266, NL-2501 AW The Hague (NL).

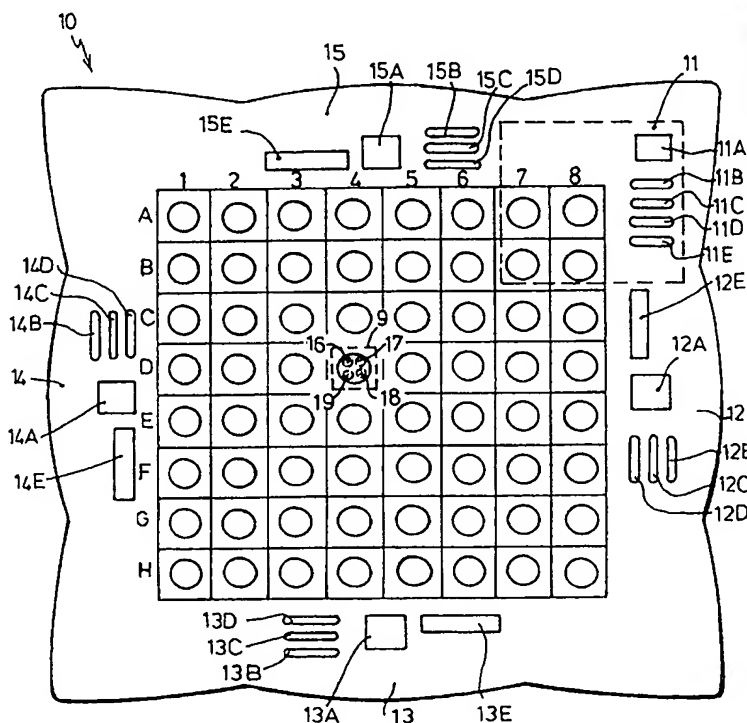
(81) Designated States: AL, AM, AT, AT (Utility model), AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, CZ (Utility model), DE, DE (Utility model), DK, DK (Utility model), EE, EE (Utility model), ES, FI, FI (Utility model), GB, GE, GH, HU, ID, IL, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SK (Utility model), SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, KE, LS, MW, SD, SZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published*With international search report.**In English translation (filed in Dutch).*

(54) Title: COMPUTER GAME

(57) Abstract

Computer game provided with a games board (10) and a computer (11) connected thereto for controlling game facets. The games board has a first number of side edges (12-15) and a second number of playing areas. Each playing area contains an activation element (20) connected with the computer, in which operating the activation element (20) activates or deactivates a certain game facet, and has mark device (9) for separately displaying an equal number of distinctive marks (16-19) as side edges. Each mark device being connected to the corresponding activation element and to the computer and is operable by the activation element and/or the computer. Each side edge containing a third number of operating means (A-D) for operating the computer for activating or deactivating certain game facets.



BEST AVAILABLE COPY

FOR THE PURPOSES OF INFORMATION ONLY

Codes used to identify States party to the PCT on the front pages of pamphlets publishing international applications under the PCT.

AL	Albania	ES	Spain	LS	Lesotho	SI	Slovenia
AM	Armenia	FI	Finland	LT	Lithuania	SK	Slovakia
AT	Austria	FR	France	LU	Luxembourg	SN	Senegal
AU	Australia	GA	Gabon	LV	Latvia	SZ	Swaziland
AZ	Azerbaijan	GB	United Kingdom	MC	Monaco	TD	Chad
BA	Bosnia and Herzegovina	GE	Georgia	MD	Republic of Moldova	TG	Togo
BB	Barbados	GH	Ghana	MG	Madagascar	TJ	Tajikistan
BE	Belgium	GN	Guinea	MK	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	TM	Turkmenistan
BF	Burkina Faso	GR	Greece	ML	Mali	TR	Turkey
BG	Bulgaria	HU	Hungary	MN	Mongolia	TT	Trinidad and Tobago
BJ	Benin	IE	Ireland	MR	Mauritania	UA	Ukraine
BR	Brazil	IL	Israel	MW	Malawi	UG	Uganda
BY	Belarus	IS	Iceland	MX	Mexico	US	United States of America
CA	Canada	IT	Italy	NE	Niger	UZ	Uzbekistan
CF	Central African Republic	JP	Japan	NL	Netherlands	VN	Viet Nam
CG	Congo	KE	Kenya	NO	Norway	YU	Yugoslavia
CH	Switzerland	KG	Kyrgyzstan	NZ	New Zealand	ZW	Zimbabwe
CI	Côte d'Ivoire	KP	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	PL	Poland		
CM	Cameroon	KR	Republic of Korea	PT	Portugal		
CN	China	KZ	Kazakhstan	RO	Romania		
CU	Cuba	LC	Saint Lucia	RU	Russian Federation		
CZ	Czech Republic	LI	Liechtenstein	SD	Sudan		
DE	Germany	LK	Sri Lanka	SE	Sweden		
DK	Denmark	LR	Liberia	SG	Singapore		
EE	Estonia						

Computer game

The present invention relates to a computer game provided with a games' board and a computer connected thereto for controlling game facets.

5 Nowadays there are numerous computer games or computer - assisted games having a great variety of subjects and games to be played on a games' board. It is an object of the present invention to provide an alternative computer game with which in a simple manner the game can be played
10 by one or more persons.

For this purpose the invention provides a computer game provided with a games' board and a compute connected thereto for controlling game facets, said games' board
15 having a first number of side edges and a second number of playing areas, each playing area containing an activation element connected with the computer, in which operating the activation element activates or deactivates a certain game facet, and having a mark device for separately
20 displaying an equal number of distinctive marks as side edges, each mark device being connected to the corresponding activation element and to the computer and being operable by the activation element and/or the computer, each side edge containing a third number of
25 operating means for operating the computer for activating or deactivating certain game facets. As each playing area can display a number of distinctive marks, a game assisted by the computer or a computer chip can be played on the games' board by a same number of players as the number of
30 distinctive marks. The game to be played depends on the programme loaded in the computer or the chip in which

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

- 2 -

certain game facets can be activated or deactivated by operating the activation elements and/or the operating means.

- 5 The games' board can be displayed on a touch-sensitive screen, each activation element being a part of the screen, i.e. a displayed playing area.

Alternatively, the games' board is a physical games' board, each activation element being a push-button.

10

Various embodiments of a computer game according to the present invention will be described by way of example on the basis of the figure, the figure schematically representing a top view of a physical games' board with push-buttons and a computer integrated therein.

15

The present invention will be described on the basis of a games' board with four side edges and four distinctive marks per playing area, so that four players can play a game, it being so that the computer can replace one or more players, but it will be clear that the games' board can have three, five or more side edges, and that each playing area can therefore display three, five or more - distinctive marks. In addition, the computer game according to the invention will be elucidated on the basis of a "Go"-like game to be played by four players, it being clear, however, that depending on the computer program, i.e. the software, the computer game is suitable for playing one or more other games.

20

25

30

The computer game shown in the figure is provided with a games' board 10 and a computer 11 integrated therein for controlling certain game facets. Although the computer is shown as being integrated in the games' board, it can also be a separate unit which is connected to the games' board via a line.

35

- 3 -

The games' board 10 has a first number of side edges 12, 13, 14 and 15, in this embodiment four, and a second number of playing areas A1 to H8, in this embodiment 64, which are disposed in a square. The number of playing areas as well as the configuration formed by them is variable. Along with a square configuration, a round, a triangular or cross-shaped one is possible, too, depending on the game to be played.

Each playing area contains a push-button 20 which is connected to the computer 11. Furthermore, each playing area has a mark device 9 for separately displaying an equal number of distinctive marks as there are side edges, i.e. four distinctive marks 16, 17, 18, 19 in the exemplary embodiment shown. Each mark device 9 is connected to the corresponding push-button and to the computer 11, in which, depending on the operation of the push-button and/or the computer 11, the mark device displays one of the distinctive marks.

In the exemplary embodiment shown each push-button is round and disposed in a square playing area. However, the present invention is not restricted to this and the push-button as well as the playing area can, for instance, have any given shape, and the playing area can also be formed by the push-button itself, for example.

Letters, numerals, symbols, projecting flags or other figures can be used as distinctive mark, but a colour that can be clearly seen from all side edges of the games' board, regardless of the direction of perception is preferably used.

A further improvement of the perceptibility of the distinctive mark is obtained in that the mark device contains a fluorescent element, for instance a lamp or a LED for displaying the colour in a light emitting manner. For

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

- 4 -

displaying four colours, for example, a mark device with one lamp and four colour filters or LED's, or with a four-tone LED, or with two two-tone LED's, or with one three-tone and one single-tone LED can be used.

5

A compact and user-friendly computer game can be obtained by manufacturing each push-button of transparent material and placing the corresponding fluorescent element under the push-button.

10

Each side edge 12, 13, 14 and 15 of the games' board 10 contains a third number of operating means per side edge, four in the exemplary embodiment, referred to as A, B, C and D, for operating the computer in order to activate or deactivate certain game facets. The operating means, such as push-buttons, touch controls or switches, for instance, can have a start, a reset, a help, a correction and an o.k. or an acknowledge function. Likewise the side edges can have operating means for selecting certain computer functions, such as selecting the game type, the standard of the game, giving help service and the like. Preferably suchlike operating means 11A to 11E are arranged on a central operating position on the games' board 10, as shown in the figure.

25

So as to provide each player with game information, such as the current score, the indication who's turn it is, a suggestion for a move and so on, every side edge 12, 13, 14 and 15 is provided with a display screen 12E, 13E, 14E and 15E, for instance a LCD screen for displaying game information.

30

Preferably at least one of the operation devices 12A, 13A, 14A and 15A of each side edge is provided with a mark belonging to one distinctive mark of a playing area, to specify which side edge, i.e. which players belong to which mark. Preferably this one operating means is a

35

- 5 -

transparent push-button under which there is a fluorescent element, for example an LED, with the colour in question.

After this an exemplary operation of the computer game according to the present invention will be elucidated on the basis of a "Go"-like game to be played by four players. The four side edges 12, 13, 14 and 15 correspond to the four players, respectively. In this example the fluorescent colours red, blue, yellow and green, respectively, are used as distinctive marks. Each playing area then contains a mark device 9, with, in this case, four LED's 17, 18, 19 and 16 for emitting red, blue, yellow and green lights, respectively.

When switching on the games' board 10, by operating push-button 11A, for instance, the computer 10 activates all mark devices 9 of all playing areas A1 to H8 to allow each colour to emit light for a short period in order to check whether there are any defective LED's. By pressing button 11B the game type can be selected, which game type appears on the LCD screens 12E to 15E. By operating the operating means 11C to 11E only human players can be selected, although the computer can play for a player, the game level or playing strength of the computer then being selected too.

Upon starting the game the computer 11 causes the LED's in the push-buttons 12A to 15A to flash and selects at random which player may commence. This player's LED, say the "red" player 12, keeps on flashing, whereas those of the other players go out. In the meantime the computer 11 has set up the initial playing situation on the games' board 10. As a result of the respective LED lighting up, the playing area D4 is red, D5 green, E4 blue and E5 yellow in this initial situation. It is the turn of the "red" player 12 and he presses a push-button to trap one of the other players. The red player 12 presses the push-button

- 6 -

of playing area D3. The computer 11 recognizes this as an incorrect move and indicates this by means of a sound and/or message on the LCD screen 12E. Subsequently the red player 12 works the operating means with the help function and the computer causes the playing areas D6, F6 and F4 to flash in red in order to show which moves can be made. The red player 12 presses the press-button of playing area F4, the LED of which goes on flashing, while the red LED's of the other playing areas are turned off. The red player 12 acknowledges his move by pushing his press-button 12A, after which the red LED of playing area F4 then goes on continuously, and the blue LED of E4 is turned off, while the red LED of E4 is turned on continuously. By his move the red player has thus "trapped" the blue player. The switch from the red player's 12 turn to that of the blue player 13 is indicated by the red LED under press-button 12A going out, and the blue LED under press-button 13A flashing. As the blue player 13 cannot make a move with which to trap another player, the computer 11 permits him to occupy a playing area which borders one of the playing areas already held. The blue player 13 can thus occupy playing area C3, C4, C5, C6, D6, E6, F6, F5, G5, G4, G3, G3, F3, E3 or D3 by pressing the corresponding press-button and then acknowledging his move by pressing press-button 13A. The players can thus in turn occupy a playing area until at the end of the game all the playing areas are taken. The computer 11 then calculates which player holds the most playing areas and indicates that he is the winner by causing the LED (12A to 15A) in question to flash and/or by displaying a message on the LCD screen, accompanied if so desired by a suitable tune.

During the game it is possible for a player to correct a move, by operating an operating means with a correction function. A time limit can be linked to this correction, so that correction is permitted only up until the moment the following player acknowledges his move by operating

- 7 -

press-button A, for instance. In addition, returning to the initial situation (reset) whilst playing the current game situation is possible; this can take place per move or in one go. For this purpose the computer game can be
5 provided with one single operating means which contains both above-mentioned reset functions or by two separate operating means, each with one of the reset functions. By returning per move, one can return to a prior game situation from where the game can be resumed.

10

Although the invention has been described on the basis of the example described above, it will be clear that a computer game according to the present invention can have numerous other embodiments, so that a large number of
15 games can be played. In addition, the games' board can be displayed on a touch-sensitive screen, so that touching a part of the screen which forms the playing area having the same consequences as pressing a press-button.

20

Claims

1. Computer game provided with a games' board and a computer connected thereto for controlling game facets, said games' board having a first number of side edges and a second number of playing areas, each playing area containing an activation element connected with the computer, in which operating the activation element activates or deactivates a certain game facet, and having mark device for separately displaying an equal number of distinctive marks as side edges, each mark device being connected to the corresponding activation element and to the computer and being operable by the activation element and/or the computer, each side edge containing a third number of operating means for operating the computer for activating or deactivating certain game facets.
2. Computer game according to claim 1, in which the games' board is displayed on a touch-sensitive screen and each activation element is part of the screen.
3. Computer game according to claim 1, in which the activation element is a push-button.
4. Computer game according to claim 1, 2 or 3, in which each mark device has as distinctive mark a separate colour.
5. Computer game according to claim 4, in which each mark device has a fluorescent element for displaying a distinctive mark.
6. Computer game according to claim 3 and 5, in which each push-button is transparent and the corresponding fluorescent element is located under the push-button.

7. Computer game according to any one of the preceding claims, in which at least one of the operating means of each side edge contains a mark belonging to one distinctive mark of the game area.

5

8. Computer game according to claim 7, in which the at least one operating means is a transparent push-button, the distinctive mark is a fluorescent colour, and an element fluorescing in said colour is located under the at
10 least one operating means.

9. Computer game according to any one of the preceding claims, in which each side edge contains a reproduction part for displaying game data.

15

1/1

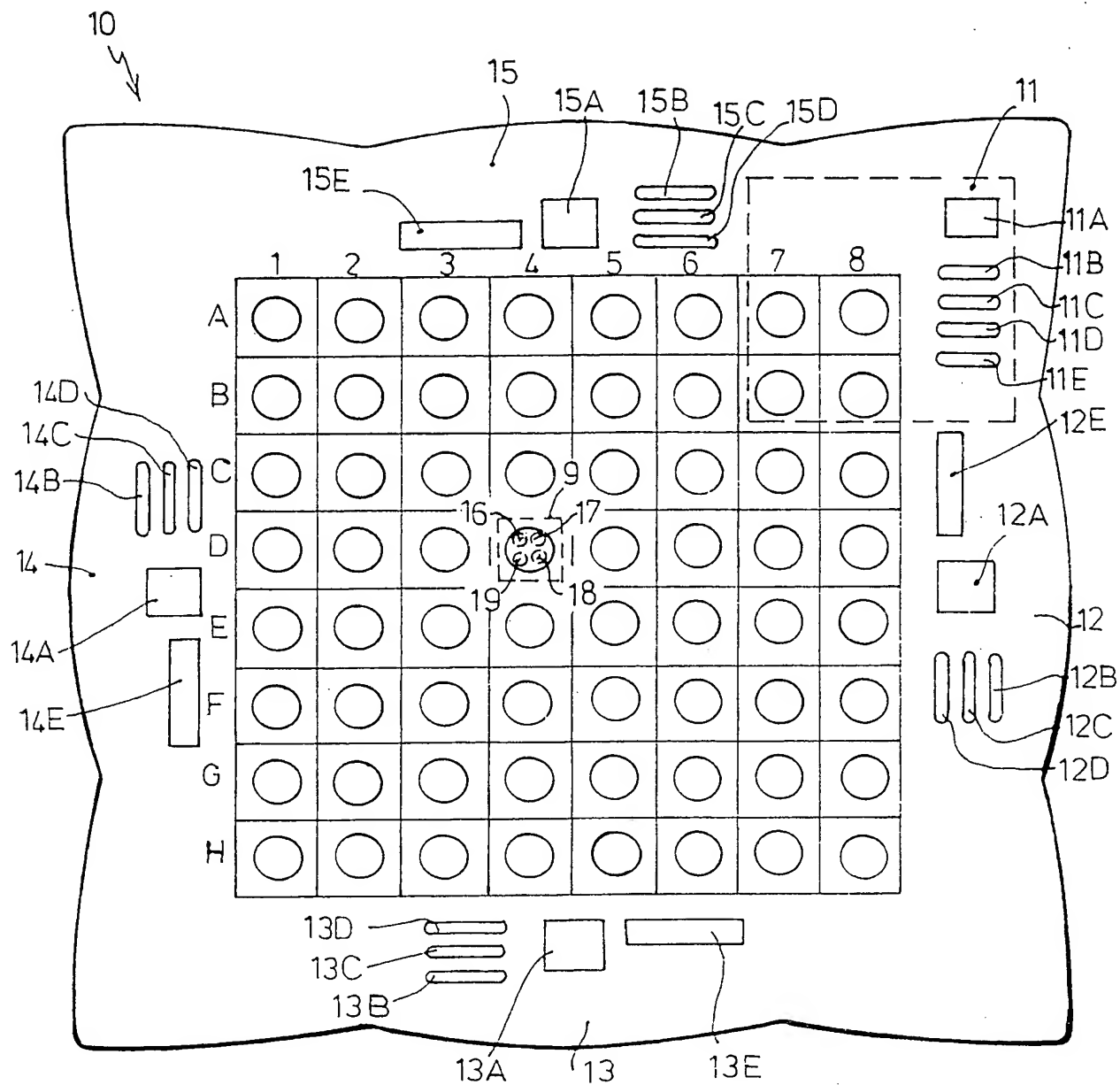


FIG. 1

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

ern. al Application No

PCT/NL 97/00589

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 6 A63F3/02

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 6 A63F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 5 423 556 A (LATYPOV) 13 June 1995 see column 2, line 31 - line 62 ---	1-9
Y	US 3 888 491 A (BERNARD ET AL.) 10 June 1975 see column 3, line 49 - line 61 ---	1-9 ---
A	GB 2 097 265 A (HOWARD ET AL.) 3 November 1982 see claims 1,10-12 ---	1
A	US 3 697 076 A (VOGEL) 10 October 1972 see column 4, line 11 - line 15 ---	1
A	FR 2 625 344 A (PARIENTI) 30 June 1989 see page 3, line 16 - line 23 ---	1,2
	-/--	

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

" Special categories of cited documents :

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

"Z" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

14 January 1998

Date of mailing of the international search report

21/01/1998

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040. Tx. 31 651 epo nl.
Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Glas, J

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Application No
PCT/NL 97/00589

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 4 082 285 A (BATHURST) 4 April 1978 see column 2, line 34 - column 3, line 7 ----	1,3,6-9
A	WO 91 19551 A (KLEIN ET AL.) 26 December 1991 see claim 1 ----	1
A	EP 0 109 778 A (SINCLAIR) 30 May 1984 see page 6, line 1 - page 7, line 15 see page 10, line 3 - line 14 -----	1

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

Application No

PCT/NL 97/00589

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 5423556 A	13-06-95	WO 9641662 A	27-12-96
US 3888491 A	10-06-75	NONE	
GB 2097265 A	03-11-82	NONE	
US 3697076 A	10-10-72	US 3764146 A	09-10-73
FR 2625344 A	30-06-89	NONE	
US 4082285 A	04-04-78	NONE	
WO 9119551 A	26-12-91	AU 8062791 A	07-01-92
EP 109778 A	30-05-84	CA 1214877 A	02-12-86
		US 4513973 A	30-04-85

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)